

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Final Office Action dated November 30, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 9 and 22 are currently amended. Claims 1–12, 14–25, and 27 are currently pending, with claims 1–8 and 15–21 withdrawn from consideration. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 9-12, 14, 22-25 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,646,689 to Matsuda (hereinafter “Matsuda”). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and reconsideration is requested.

Independent claim 9 is allowable in that it recites “a plurality of buffer lines disposed between each of the alignment layer line, the liquid crystal layer line, the sealant coating line, the assembling line, and the cutting line to maintain one of the first and second substrates while the other of the first and second substrates is processed in order to synchronize the first and second substrates.” Nothing in Matsuda teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

The Examiner states robot 9 in Matsuda synchronizes movement of the first and second substrates. The Examiner also alleges on page 3 of the last Office Action that Matsuda teaches the robot 9 picks up the second substrate and loads and maintains it in the second surface plate 13 while the first substrate is picked up into the processing line. Applicants respectfully disagree. In Matsuda, the robot itself does not maintain the second substrate 32. Matsuda merely teaches the second substrate 32 is on the second surface plate 13. See column 9, lines 5-10. Thus, Matsuda does not teach robot 9 maintains the second substrate 32 because Matsuda teaches surface plate 13

maintains the second substrate 32. However, this second surface plate 13 is not part of a “buffer line disposed between each of the alignment layer line, the liquid crystal layer line, the sealant coating line, the assembling line, and the cutting line,” as recited in claim 9. Furthermore, robot 9 only transfers and waits for the first substrate 31 while the first substrate is being processed. That is, robot 9 does not touch the second substrate 32. See column 8, lines 66-67; column 9, lines 13-50. Thus, Matsuda does not teach that the robot maintains “one of the first and second substrates while the other of the first and second substrates is processed in order to synchronize the first and second substrates.” Applicants respectfully assert that the “buffer line” claimed in claim 9 is patentably distinct from the robot 9 taught by Matsuda.

Also, in Matsuda, robot 9 is only disposed between a sealing line and an assembling line. Thus, Matsuda also does not teach “a plurality of buffer lines disposed between each of the alignment layer line, the liquid crystal layer line, the sealant coating line, the assembling line, and the cutting line.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 9, and its dependent claims 10–12 and 14, are allowable over Matsuda.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of independent claim 22 and request reconsideration. Independent claim 22 is allowable in that it recites “maintaining one of the first and second substrates in a buffer line disposed between each of the first unit, the second unit, the third unit, a fourth unit, and a fifth unit while the other of the first and second substrates is processed.” Nothing in Matsuda teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. As stated above, the second surface plate 13 is not part of a “buffer line disposed between each of the first unit, the second unit, the third unit, a fourth unit, and a fifth unit,” as recited in claim 22. Accordingly, for the same or similar reasons as those applying to claim 9 above, Applicants

respectfully submit that claim 22, and its dependent claims 23–25 and 27, are allowable over Matsuda.

Applicants believe the foregoing remarks and amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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